REMARKS

The Office Action mailed November 10, 2004 has been received and the Examiner's comments carefully reviewed. Prior to entry of this paper, Claims 50-98 were pending. Claims 50-98 were subject to a restriction requirement. In this paper, Claims 75, 83, and 96-98 and are amended to correct clerical errors, and Claims 99-118 are added. Claims 50-118 are currently pending. No new subject matter has been added.

Restriction Requirement

Claims 50-98 were restricted into six groups (I-VI) under 35 U.S.C. § 121. Applicant respectfully assumes that the six groups, including the new claims, include: Group I (Claims 50-73, 99-100, 104, and 107); Group II (Claims 74-82 and 111); Group III (Claims 83-93, 112, and 113); Group IV (Claims 94, 114, and 115); Group V (Claims 95 and 96); and Group VI (Claims 97 and 98). Claims 101-103, 105-106, 108-110, and 116-118 are respectfully submitted to be linking claims.

Applicant respectfully elects group I (Claim 50-73, 99-100, 104, and 107) with traversal.

Applicant respectfully submits that the restriction requirement is improper because there is no serious burden on the examiner if restriction is required.

The Office Action stated:

"Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group I, II, II, IV, V & VI is mutually exclusive, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper" (emphasis added).

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the three statements emphasized in bold above.

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First, it is respectfully submitted that each of the groups (I-VI) are properly classified in class 714, subclass 738, and that each of the groups have a similar status within class 714, subclass 738.

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Second, it is respectfully submitted that a search required for each of the groups (I-VI) is not mutually exclusive. It is respectfully submitted that a search for any group would be highly relevant to the examination of claims in other groups.

For example, comparing Claim 100 (from Group I), Claim 111 (from Group II), and Claim 97 (from Group VI), it is respectfully submitted that it should be readily apparent that a search for one of these claims is highly relevant to the other two claims.

Similarly, comparing Claim 93 (from Group III), Claim 112 (from Group III), and Claim 114 (from Group IV), it is respectfully submitted that it should be readily apparent that a search for one of these claims is highly relevant to the other two claims.

Similarly, comparing Claim 95 (from Group V) and Claim 97 (from Group VI), it is respectfully submitted that it should be readily apparent that a search for one of these claims is highly relevant to the other claim.

Similarly, comparing Claim 113 (from Group III), Claim 115 (from Group IV), and Claim 95 (from Group V), it is respectfully submitted that it should be readily apparent that a search for one of these claims is highly relevant to the other two claims.

For at least the reasons stated above, it is respectfully submitted that the restriction requirement be withdrawn.

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Conclusion

Applicant elects Group I (Claims 50-73, 99-100, 104, and 107) with traversal. It is respectfully requested that the restriction requirement be withdrawn. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's representative at the below-listed telephone number if it is believed that prosecution of this application may be assisted thereby.

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Customer No.: 38845

Respectfully submitted,

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